



Arizona Department of Administration Office of Grants and Federal Resources News Bulletin

October 2018

ADOA assistant director, GFR designated to review waiver requests

Requests to waive solicitation and award procedures should be directed to GFR

Matthew Hanson, ADOA Assistant Director, Grants and Federal Resources, has been granted authority to consider waivers of the state's solicitation and award procedures of grant applications if a situation exists that makes compliance with Arizona Revised Statute (ARS) [41-2702](#) impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest, except the grant solicitation and award shall be made with competition that is practicable under the circumstances. This authority lies with the ADOA director or his/her designee under [ARS 41-2703](#). ADOA Acting Director Gilbert Davidson named Hanson his designee, effective October 12, 2018.

"Our office is here to facilitate the jobs of grant program managers across the state while ensuring agencies adhere to legal requirements," said Hanson. "For agencies that have valid reasons to request a waiver, we will give those requests due consideration." Agencies seeking a waiver should submit a request with documented justification to GFR@azdoa.gov.

Grant data standards policy development continues to evolve

GREAT Act passed by the House of Representatives, legislation moves to the Senate

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the Grant Reporting Efficiency and Agreements Transparency (GREAT) Act in September. The legislation requires the Office of Management and Budget, jointly with the executive department that issues the most federal grant awards, to: establish government-wide data standards for information reported by grant recipients; issue guidance directing federal agencies to apply those standards, and require the publication of recipient-reported data collected from all agencies on a single website. The bill was sent to the Senate for consideration.

Data Transparency 2018 Conference supports executive and legislative progress

In October, government officials and data industry leaders convened for Data Transparency 2018, the sixth annual conference on emerging trends in data collection, sharing and analysis with a focus on process improvement. GFR's Senior IT Project manager, Dean Johnson, attended the conference. He is carefully monitoring the changes in policy and sees positive developments on the horizon.

"The concept of standardized datasets will make it possible to consolidate and allow for trend analysis across a wide variety of grant programs. The ability to evaluate similar or related programs and have access to clean, accurate and standardized data will be key in identifying new opportunities and driving positive outcomes," said Johnson. "Hopefully standardized and open data will make the collection much more straightforward, but the real key on the analysis side would have to be geared toward machine learning. Using machine learning tools and techniques, it will be possible to perform analysis en masse across related programs to help identify trending metrics, efforts that strongly align to defined goals or, ideally, something truly new."

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GFR received more than 100 applications for the state's Lower Emissions School Bus Replacement Program

GFR is administering the program through the eCivis Subrecipient Manager (SRM)

In June, Governor Doug Ducey [announced a \\$38 million plan](#) to purchase more than 310 new school buses in low-income communities across the state utilizing settlement funds from the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust. The Office of Grants and Federal Resources (GFR) is tasked with administering the program. In aligning with its mission to provide the eCivis SRM to state agencies as a solution for managing grant programs, GFR staff is administering the school bus program through the eCivis SRM tool.

GFR staff worked with the governor's office to craft the program guidelines to replace up to 10 percent of a qualifying school system's eligible fleet. The criteria for eligibility is twofold: the school had to have a free and reduced lunch eligibility rate of 60 percent or more of the student population and buses slated for replacement had to be diesel-powered and 15 years or older (model year 2003 or earlier) with at least 100,000 miles. GFR staff traveled around the state over the summer to share information about the program and offer eCivis SRM training to school employees. Training materials, including a webinar video, were posted on the agency's [VW settlement information website](#). The application period ran August 13 — September 28, 2018.

Grant professionals are currently reviewing the applications. The initial review period will conclude in October, with the first round of awards announced on November 1. GFR staff will follow up with eligible school systems that submitted incomplete applications.

"We want to ensure that every eligible school system receives at least one bus," said Matthew Hanson, ADOA Assistant Director, Grants and Federal Resources. "We will work closely with qualifying school personnel to get the proper documentation so they receive the funds."

FY19 Appropriations "minibus" signed

Law also has short-term continuing resolution

On September 28, the president signed an [apropriations "minibus" bill](#) that included FY 2019 appropriations for the Department of Defense (DOD), Labor, Health and Human Services (LHHS) and Education. The law also included a short-term Continuing Resolution (CR) to temporarily fund remaining government programs until the rest of the appropriations bills are finalized and signed into law. The CR, a funding extension that will expire on December 7, 2018, covers the areas of the federal government not included for full FY 19 funding in this minibus or [prior appropriations legislation](#) that the president signed into law on September 21.

Reminder: monitoring plans due on Oct. 31

As noted in the [September issue](#) of the *GFR News Bulletin*, the Office of Grants and Federal Resources (GFR) is implementing an annual statewide monitoring plan to ensure state agencies are monitoring at least 10 percent of their open grants. The policy, included in the Grant Management Manual (GMM) Grantor ([Section 8.2.1](#)), will apply to all state agencies that grant funding to subrecipients. Agencies must submit their initial monitoring plans by Oct. 31, 2018. Hereafter, the plans will be due to GFR by May 31 each year (the next plan is due May 31, 2019). The Auditor General's Office and GAO Internal Controls Group will be assuring compliance with this policy within their individual work with state agencies. Agencies should have these types of monitoring plans in place already. Grant program managers should email their agencies' subrecipient monitoring plans to GFR@azdoa.gov.

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